Chaffey College Library:

Geocaching Project Proposal

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Abstract

Chaffey College Library will institute a geocaching program to help students discover the resources the library has to offer. In addition to making this resource more accessible to students in a unique way the library will partner with Student Health Services to promote mental health awareness during exam periods each semester. This program has a low cost and high reward. If successful this program will have the ability to increase mental health awareness in students, develop community, and increase library visits.

Executive Summary

Chaffey College Library looks to imbed a geocaching feature into the Chaffey College Mobile App. This new feature will increase student engagement, highlight library collections and educate students of the services available within the Library/Learning Resource Center throughout the school year. While events in collaboration with Student Health Services—twice each semester—will work to increase mental health awareness and stress management.

Geocaching is a real-world outdoor treasure hunting game that uses GPS-Enabled devices to locate a geocache container. In the case of Chaffey College, the initial clue for the geocache will be located throughout campus, containing clues that describe an item within the collection or service. The final geocaches, containing the logbook, will be found within the walls of the Library/Learning Resource Center. Students will then either check out the material or use the service in order to receive credit for having found it. With Chaffey College incorporating virtual badges to student's accounts, we will create badges for every material and service available through geocaching. These badges will then be visible on their student accounts on the app.

By embedding geocaching into the Chaffey College Mobile App, we will not only be able to increase student engagement but also introduce the campus community to the various departments and services available in our new Library/Learning Resource Center with a hands-on approach.

In addition to providing students an opportunity to learn to navigate the collection and various services offered, we will expand upon the existing mental health awareness provided by Student Health Services. This expansion will comprise mental health weeks, held during midterms and finals of each semester, which can be especially trying for students. These weeks will have competitive events that will be used to create awareness around mental health and provide students with opportunities to learn to manage and cope with their stress and anxiety, while earning badges along the way.

To ensure the effectiveness of geocaching, we will monitor gate counts, student-staff/faculty interactions as logged in LibAnswers, the number of times QR codes are scanned and badges earned by students, as well as in-app survey feedback.

This project is designed to be incorporated into the app with minimal impact on the library budget and time with most costs being absorbed by district provided resources. Printing will comprise most of the time, which our student workers will take on, in addition to affixing printed materials (QR codes, flyers, etc.) and creating badges. The launch event will be covered by donations provided by the campus community. There will also be no cost to our marketing campaign, which will primarily be done over social media - handled by our librarian in charge of

our social media accounts. However, we propose a budget of $2,800 to cover the cost of a Geocaching Specialist, this will ensure that we implement geocaching into our app as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

The flexibility of this program allows students to participate as little or as much as they would like. Students will engage with the program at their own convenience, allowing for students to spend longer periods of time on campus; in turn, making more use of the services we have to offer. By implementing geocaching and in partnering with Student Health Services, we aim to—long term—benefit from the development of our campus community, improve overall mental wellness, and add value to the college experience. While students will be using their mobile devices, we aim to connect our students by building a community which will have them engaging, not only with our resources and services, but with one another as well.

We project that by implementing geocaching into the Chaffey Mobile App we will create a fun and engaging service that will provide an increase in use of library resources and services, increased mental wellness of our students, and create an overall sense of community.

Introduction

The Chaffey College Library will imbed geocaching into the Chaffey College Mobile App to increase student engagement, while highlighting collections and library services for students throughout the year. Furthermore, geocaching events will be used to increase mental health awareness twice each semester. With the collaborative efforts of IT and library technicians, we will enable QR scanning capabilities and enable mobile view of the library collection into the Chaffey College Mobile App. These collaborative efforts and event planning with Student Health Services will take place during the Summer months, to ensure services are operational for the campus community at the start of the Fall Semester. To ensure stakeholders can participate in the necessary visionary reviews, the district and staff will have the opportunity to provide feedback during monthly department meetings – throughout the planning and execution phases; faculty will have options to provide feedback via email after completion; while students will receive randomly generated in-app surveys after completion – to continuously evaluate objectives and performance.

Opportunity Statement

Chaffey College Library seeks to provide an engaging environment for the success of our campus community; with whom there is currently limited engagement. By embedding geocaching within our app, we will increase library presence, while educating students of the

multitude of services available. Furthermore, it will be used to highlight campus wellness events to improve student mental health.

Recommended Solution

Geocaching is a real-world outdoor treasure hunting game that uses GPS–enabled devices in order to find a geocache—a hidden container at a particular location. Once the item has been located, a logbook is inside to declare the geocacher has found it. For our purposes, these geocaches will be hidden around campus and lead the students back to the Library/Learning Resource Center (LRC) to locate an item or service. Once the item is located, it will require the student to check out the item or use the service/ service tutorial, to "sign" the logbook and receive credit. Those not wanting to check out a physical item, will be able to locate a QR code for the eBook. Once the student has used the service or checked out the item, they have the ability to sign the log and earn a digital badge that will then manifest on their student account.

The primary solution of embedding geocaching into the library app is to increase student engagement. With our new LRC being constructed and containing numerous departments under one roof, geocaching will provide an entertaining hands-on opportunity to teach our campus community about LRC services: circulation and reference desks, computer banks, tutoring, supplemental instruction, the collection, etc.

In addition to highlighting library collections and library services, a collaborative effort with Student Health Services (SHS) will provide students opportunities to learn about mental health awareness and how to manage stress. SHS stresses the importance of mental wellness, stress management, and holds "surviving finals" workshops. With SHS, we will expand on mental wellness initiatives by creating a mental health week, twice per semester. This would be held during the stressful times of the semester such as finals and midterms. As a part of our mental health weeks, we would incorporate a competitive geocaching event; increasing awareness around mental health while providing students with a way to "survive" stress and anxiety in college; earning badges along the way.

Support Needed

This project will require the support of our library team and other departments on campus.

We ask that Information Technology Services (ITS), assist us in further developing the Chaffey College Mobile App to include a library portion. The library tab of the app will include access to the catalog as well as QR scanning capabilities. Since the College is already working on a way to include badging and link it to student accounts, we only ask ITS to verify that the badges earned from geocaching are functioning.

Library technicians will work with ITS to convert the library collection to be viewable in the Chaffey College Mobile app and create QR codes that link to library eBooks.

Library student workers will: print and adhere QR codes, create the badges as new items are added to the geocaching system, and ensure that the clues can be found around campus: verifying their location once a month.

Collaborative efforts between our event coordinator and SHS to plan and fund a prize for the competitive mental health week event, as well our geocaching roll out event.

Metrics

Gate counting will be used to measure the number of students entering the library, for all services. Librarians and library staff will continue to use LibAnswers to log the specifics of transactions between staff/faculty with students. Chaffey College Mobile App will keep a tally of users and interactions, especially the number of times QR codes are scanned and number of badges earned from discovering services or checking out items will also determine the use of this new service, while in-app surveys will provide students with the opportunity to provide feedback.

Outcome

Incorporating this initiative in our library will provide a hands-on opportunity to increase student engagement, library presence on campus, library services, and circulation while also increasing awareness around mental health.

Cost factors and budget projections

This geocaching project was designed not to have large cost overheads, so it can easily be incorporated into the work schedule of Chaffey College employees, including primarily librarians and IT staff, with little impact on resources, including time and money. Factors that were taken into consideration include the costs of a Geocaching Specialist, marketing, printing, IT specialists, and a launch event function. It will be necessary to print QR codes and supporting materials required in the geocaching; to be successful, this project will need to be marketed via the Chaffey College social media pages and student emails; and a launch event is planned to kick off the project to draw further interest. The printing and IT costs will be absorbed by either the library or district budgets and costs associated with the launch event will be covered with donations in kind, by reaching out to the campus community. There will be no associated costs

with marketing, as this will be handled by the librarians who routinely handle the social media accounts. The costs associated with the Geocaching specialist will be needed in the initial stages of the project, and thereafter, no further expenses are anticipated. The Geocaching Specialist is expected to cost $70 per hour, so will cost $560 per day, and the work will take approximately one week to complete. Therefore, the total cost will be $2,800. Although this is not a budgeted amount, we are requesting that this amount could be allocated from our annual collections budget, since it is intended to highlight the library collections and resources that are available to students.

Long-Term benefits

The long-term benefits of this project would be the development of our community. This development would improve the mental health of our students and add value to their on-campus experience. Per Liberal Arts College, students want a connection to their campus "and when a college offers a strong sense of community, there are more opportunities to connect... An engaging college community will ensure that students' sense of belonging carries over into everyday campus life, and not just during special activities." This program would carry into the everyday campus life. Students would be able to Geocache every day. The flexibility of this program allows for our students to participate with as much or as little time they want to dedicate to it. The hope is that students would use their time and stay on campus longer. Partnering with SHS will allow us to tackle another problem plaguing college students - mental health.

In 2019 the American College Health Association found that "87% of college students felt overwhelmed by all they had to do, 66% felt overwhelming anxiety…" This study did not consider the current global pandemic. The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center recently released a study on the impacts of Covid -19 on higher education. Out of 13,000 community-college students conducted by the center this spring, "75 percent of respondents were concerned about feeling isolated…" The health and wellbeing of our students is always the number one priority. The pandemic has not made mental health issues any easier. By implementing this program, we allow for students to feel less isolated. We are connecting them to the community at large. Even if they pursue this activity on their own, they will know, through the app, that they are connected to a larger community.

This program will also help with retention of students, "'One of the most important factors in keeping a student enrolled is a relationship with someone on campus,' says Linda L. García, president of the Center for Community College Student Engagement, 'even if it's just with one person, whether a professor or a groundskeeper.'" Geocaching will allow for our students to create relationships with our library staff. By partnering with Student Health Services for mental

health awareness we might be able to create even more connections across campus. Just having this program will allow for students to ask questions and engage with our staff.

Last, but certainly not least, this program will drive more students into the library to access all of the resources we have available for them. Providing mental health resources during exam periods may help our students test better and achieve higher grades. Setting our scholars up for success benefits us all. As our school vision states, we would certainly be "improving lives through education."

Impact projection

As discussed above there are several benefits to this program. With the implementation of this program, we believe that our library will see an uptick in services used. We currently do not believe that the student body is engaging with the library as much as it could. This program will easily allow us to track student usage of the library and track whether participation increases. By partnering with Student Health Services, we are providing easy access to a mental health service in a place where several students will be located during those busy exam periods. When a student is stressed using the library or studying for an exam, they can easily see that we have partnered with Student Health Services to alleviate some of that stress. This program could also help create a sense of community on our campus. This program allows students to feel connected to the larger population. All of these benefits would increase the wellbeing of our students.

Conclusion

With the implementation of this project, the Chaffey College Library will accomplish their goal of strengthening student engagement through our geocaching project that will highlight library services and collections and will collaborate with Student Health Services to increase mental health awareness among the student body. The hide-and-seek aspect of geocaching enables the library to provide a fun and engaging service that will not only give the students insight into existing library collections and services but will also highlight the new services that will be available in the Library/Learning Resource Center. In addition to the collaborations with various departments, we will partner with Student Health Services to learn about mental health and how to manage stress and anxiety. Staff and other stakeholders will have the option to input their suggestions or questions about the project in a monthly department meeting, faculty will have the option of projecting their opinions through email, and students can provide feedback through in app-surveys after completion of their geocaching activity. The execution and maintenance of this project is expected to have low overhead costs with forecasted costs for this project including a $2,800 fee for the use of a Geocaching Specialist for a week of oversight, other cost such as

launch of the project, printing, marketing, and time of the IT specialist are either low or are already resources being utilized at the library that will not acquire additional funds. The impact of this project and the long-term benefits that will develop from this project includes an enhanced awareness and increased utilization of library services and collections, and improvement of the mental health among students, and students will experience a greater sense of belonging within the community.

Appendix:

Project Charter

Project Scope Statement

The Chaffey College Library will imbed geocaching into the Chaffey College Mobile App to increase student engagement, while highlighting collections and library services for students throughout the year and increase mental health awareness with geocaching events – twice each semester. With the collaborative efforts of IT and library technicians, we will enable QR scanning capabilities and enable mobile view of the library collection into the Chaffey College Mobile App. To ensure stakeholders can participate in the necessary visionary reviews, the district and staff will have the opportunity to provide feedback during monthly department meetings – throughout the planning and execution phases; faculty will have option to provide feedback via email after completion; while students will receive randomly generated in-app surveys after completion – to continuously evaluate objectives and performance. This is not a costly project. It is also meant just for library service awareness and not a general awareness for the College in general.

Business Case

Incorporating this initiative in our library will provide a hands-on opportunity to increase student engagement, library presence on campus, library services, and circulation. Furthermore, it will also be used to increase awareness around mental health, especially during midterms and finals. Adding value to the student experience and increasing mental health awareness will enable students to better understand the library and its services through a fun and engaging activity that will also encourage students to utilize the library services and the Library/Learning Resource Center that will lead students to increase their skills and abilities to be successful in their academic pursuits.

Milestone Schedule and Acceptance Criteria

The project will be carried out over the summer months when there is generally less student activity on campus. The milestones have been listed under the different phases with their acceptance criteria:

Milestone	**Completion date**	**Judge**	**Acceptance Criteria**
Current state: Project needing approval			
Phase 1: Project management			

Stakeholder meetings	6/2	Project Manager	All stakeholders identified and consulted for approval
Funding identified	6/7	Budget Development	Comprehensive plan
Marketing strategy	6/15	Marketing	Comprehensive marketing plan to reach students
Phase 2: Tech consulting			
Make catalog viewable on app	6/20	IT	Catalog viewable
Geocaching consultant	6/12	Project Manager	Develop suitable geocaching map on campus
Print & cache QR codes	6/20	Marketing	Print necessary documentation
Create in-app survey	6/20	IT	Develop geocaching survey
Phase 3: Implementation			
IT incl. catalog in app	6/20	IT	Include catalog in app
IT incl. QR scanning capabilities	6/27	IT	Include relevant geocaching QR scanning ability in app
Phase 4: Pilot			
Training for librarians	7/4	Project Manager	Understanding of how geocaching and app works to instruct and troubleshoot effectively
Pilot	8/1	Project Manager	Geocaching app works to highlight library collection and services
Mental health planning	7/31	Communications	Comprehensive plan for mental health inclusion with geocaching
Phase 5: Project launch			
Launch planning	8/27	Events	Successful launch event

		Coordinator	
Project Launch	9/3	Project Manager	Geocaching successful
Ultimate goal: Geocaching app fully integrated in Chaffey College app			

Risks

The following risks associated with this project, and their contingency plans have been identified.

Risks	**Risk Owner**	**Contingency Plans**
Funding is not granted	Project Manager	Librarian will research ways to incorporate this into the campus budget Fundraiser will be developed and implemented
App does not work effectively on all phones, i.e., iPhone/Androids	IT Liaison	Work with IT department to create an app update to ensure it works effectively on all necessary platforms
With an increase in online coursework being offered, some students do not opt to do in-person instruction, making the geocaching project redundant	IT Liaison	Work with IT to develop virtual geocaching for the app, with the same goals as the in-person geocaching project
Student engagement is low	Marketing	Focus group to see what could be improved

Resources

The resources that are required for this project have been included in the following table:

Money	**People**	**Other**
$2,800 for Geocaching Consultant	IT technicians	Printing

	Librarians	Food and drinks for launch

Routines

- Be respectful of other people's opinions.
- Give feedback in a constructive manner.
- Be prepared for all meetings.
- For virtual formal meetings, there will be one speaker at a time; others will mute themselves while not speaking.
- The goal is for open and honest communication.
- Meetings will be open-minded, no-judgement zones.
- If something doesn't make sense, ask for clarification.
- Group work will be divided evenly between members.
- If something isn't working for you, let the team know.
- Always adhere to deadlines. If deadlines can't be met, then ensure that this is communicated to team members well in advance.
- Always deliver and present our best work.

Communication Needs

For the communication plan we have identified the following as stakeholders: District; Library Dean; Library Staff; Students; and Faculty. This is how and when we are planning to communicate with each group:

- District - indirect communication via feedback from the Dean
- Library Dean - will be informed at monthly meetings, and will update the District
- Library Staff - project updates during monthly meetings, requesting feedback when necessary
- Student Health Services - email regular updates to library liaison, who will provide feedback to the department during meetings.
- Students - email with updates on geocaching details at the beginning of the project rollout, and thereafter twice a semester, before midterms and again before finals regarding mental wellness, stress management and workshop opportunities. Weekly updates on Instagram.
- Faculty - email at the beginning of general geocaching project rollout, and before midterms and finals to request they encourage students to engage with this program.

Collection of Knowledge

It is necessary to communicate all goals carefully and ensure that all team members understand the expectations and timelines. Furthermore, all our stakeholders should be included in the initial stages of the project and should be updated regularly regarding the progress. It is necessary that all members who are involved in the geocaching project are committed to the goals and objectives and understand what the deliverables are within the timeframe.

Commitment

Role	**Name**	**Date**	**Signature**
Project Manager	Clarissa Moreno		Clarissa Moreno
Core Team Members			
IT Liaison & Event Coordinator	Doug Villanueva		Doug Villanueva
Budget Development	Sarah Tribelhorn		Sarah Tribelhorn
Marketing & Communication Liaison	Shay McGroarty		Shay McGroarty

Works Cited

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